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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated in the following listing of all claims:

1. (Currently amended) A computer system coupled with a pipelined network comprising:  
a plurality of initiator nodes coupled to send packets, into the network;  
a plurality of target nodes coupled to receive packets sent into the network; and  
a plurality of pipeline stages for transmitting data across the network, each pipeline stage consuming a predetermined time period, thereby providing for a predetermined time period for transmission for each packet successfully sent between one of the initiator nodes and one of the target nodes, the pipeline stages including an arbitration stage; and  
arbitration logic coupled to the initiator nodes, the pipelined network, and the target nodes,  
wherein for a particular transfer, the arbitration logic is coupled to receive an indication from a particular target node for the particular transfer as to whether the particular transfer can be supported in the particular target node;  
wherein the initiator nodes supply requests to the arbitration logic for transmission of respective packets to respective target nodes during respective arbitration stages, the arbitration logic responsive to the initiator node requests to schedule packet transmission across the network.
2. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 1 wherein the pipelined network is synchronous in that boundaries of all the pipeline stages are aligned.
3. (Previously presented) The computer system as recited in claim 1, wherein the pipeline stages include a transfer stage and an acknowledge stage, the stages being in a fixed time relation to each other.
4. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3, the pipeline stages having equal length.

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5. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3 further comprising a check stage in which an initiator node checks if transmission of a sent packet was successful.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously presented) A computer system coupled with a pipelined network comprising:

a plurality of initiator nodes coupled to send packets, into the network;  
a plurality of target nodes coupled to receive packets sent into the network;  
a plurality of pipeline stages for transmitting data across the network, each pipeline stage consuming a predetermined time period, thereby providing for a predetermined time period for transmission for each packet successfully sent between one of the initiator nodes and one of the target nodes wherein the pipeline stages include an arbitration stage, a transfer stage, an acknowledge stage, the stages being in a fixed time relation to each other;

arbitration logic coupled to the initiator nodes, the pipelined network, and the target nodes, the initiator nodes supplying requests to the arbitration logic for transmission of respective packets to respective target nodes during respective arbitration stages, the arbitration logic responsive to the initiator node requests to schedule packet transmission across the network,  
wherein for a particular transfer, the arbitration logic is coupled to receive an indication from a particular target node for the particular transfer as to whether the particular transfer can be supported in the particular target node.

8. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3 wherein during the transfer stage the packet supplied by the initiator traverses the network.

9. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3 wherein during the acknowledge stage, an acknowledge packet is returned by the target node to the initiator node.

10. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 9 wherein the acknowledge packet is checked by the initiator during the check stage.

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11. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 10 wherein the check stage is fixed in time in relation to the arbitration stage, thereby allowing the initiator node to check for successful completion of sending the packet a fixed time after the arbitration stage.

12. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3 wherein the transfer stage includes multiple pipeline stages to transmit the transfer packet across the network.

13. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3 wherein the acknowledge stage includes multiple stages to transmit the acknowledge packet across the network.

14. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3 wherein the number of bytes transferred per request during the transfer stage is fixed.

15. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 3 wherein outstanding transactions across the pipelined network are delivered in order.

16. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a switch coupling the nodes on the pipelined network.

17. (Original) The computer system as recited in claim 16 wherein the pipelined network comprises a plurality of cascaded switches.

18. (Currently amended) A method for transmitting information across a pipelined computer network, comprising:

transmitting the information from an initiator node to a target node using a plurality of pipeline stages in the computer network, each pipeline stage having a fixed forwarding delay;

overlapping an operation in one pipeline stage with another operation in another pipeline stage; [[and]]

requesting a path through the network from the initiator node to the target node during an arbitration stage from arbitration logic, the arbitration logic communicating with

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the target node to determine if the target node can accept a packet from the initiator node;  
sending at least one data packet containing the information from the initiator node to the target node during one or more transfer stages; and  
sending an acknowledge packet containing status of receipt of the data packet from the target to the initiator during one or more acknowledge pipeline stages;  
wherein during the arbitration stage, the arbitration logic provides a grant indication to the initiator node to indicate that the initiator node can transmit the packet during a subsequent transfer stage.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently amended) The method as recited in claim ~~[[19]]~~18 wherein at least one of the arbitration stage, the transfer stage and the acknowledge stage are overlapped.

22. (Currently amended) The method as recited in claim ~~[[19]]~~18 wherein the pipelined network includes a first switching circuit coupling the initiator node and the target node, the first switching circuit carrying information transmitted during the transfer stage.

23. (Original) The method as recited in claim 22 wherein the pipelined network includes a second switching circuit coupling the initiator node and the target node, the second switching circuit being independent of the first switching circuit and wherein information for at least a portion of pipeline operations are carried over the second switching circuit simultaneously with operations for the transfer stage carried over the first switching circuit.

24. (Original) The method as recited in claim 23 wherein information for the arbitration and acknowledge stages are carried over the second switching circuit during arbitration and acknowledge pipeline stages, respectively.

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25. (Currently amended) The method as recited in claim ~~[[19]]~~18 further comprising generating a schedule for traversing the pipeline stages of the network in the arbiter, the schedule determining for each slot on the pipeline, each slot being a length of a pipeline stage, which input port is connected to which output port.

26. (Currently amended) A method as recited in claim ~~[[19]]~~18 wherein each initiator node of a plurality of initiator nodes provides a request vector indicating one or more desired target nodes, to the arbitration logic, the request vectors for at least some of the initiator nodes including multiple target nodes and wherein the arbitration logic schedules a future pipeline slot to avoid conflicts, the arbitration logic globally scheduling use of the network.

27. (Currently amended) The method as recited in claim ~~[[19]]~~18 further comprising the initiator node checking the acknowledge packet a fixed number of pipeline stages after sending the transfer packet, to determine whether transmission of the information was successful.

28. (Previously presented) A method for transmitting information across a pipelined computer network, comprising:

transmitting the information from an initiator node to a target node using a plurality of pipeline stages in the computer network, each pipeline stage having a fixed forwarding delay;

overlapping an operation in one pipeline stage with another operation in another pipeline stage;

requesting a path through the network from the initiator node to the target node during an arbitration stage from arbitration logic, the arbitration logic communicating with the target node to determine if the target node can accept a packet from the initiator node; and

scheduling usage of the network using an arbiter in response to requests from initiator nodes to allocate each stage of the pipeline so as to avoid conflicts for network resources.

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29. (Original) The method as recited in claim 28 wherein the scheduling includes accounting for prescheduled requests, the prescheduled requests requesting periodic slots on the network.

30. (Original) The method as recited in claim 18 further comprising sending all information across the network in order.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Canceled)

33. (Canceled)

34. (Canceled)

35. (Canceled)

36. (Canceled)

37. (Canceled)